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A Bold New Approach to Medical Education

"We are trying to build a medical education program that really serves the needs of the community", says Dr. Zohair Nooman, dean of the faculty of medicine at Suez Canal University. The faculty has undertaken an innovative and bold new course in medical education designed to link more closely Egypt's medical education and health services to the health needs of the population. An $8.1 million USAID grant assists in this effort.

Dr. Zohair points out that only a few institutions in the world follow this unique method of training doctors. The emphasis is on field training to expose students to actual community health problems. Beginning with the first year of this six-year program, medical students at Suez Canal University must spend a certain percentage of their time working with staff in rural health units. By achieving a balance between classroom study and on-the-job training, students will be better prepared for careers in rural and small urban centers.

"One of the biggest advantages of this new curriculum," says Dr. Zohair, "is that students are oriented to the country's major health problems. They are trained in the same environment in which they later will work." Classes are purposely kept small. The first class will graduate in 1987.

USAID is providing technical assistance, through Boston University, to establish the new medical school curriculum. The grant also has funded equipment and help in setting up the university's microbiology laboratory and medical library, considered one of the best in Egypt. Because many of the medical faculty members choose to devote some time to their own practices, in addition to teaching at the university, USAID has financed establishment of a "group medical practice" in Ismailia. By sharing one medical practice, each doctor has more time for teaching and curriculum development.

There are over 4,000 Government-operated rural health units in Egypt. Selected units in Suez, Port Said, Ismailia, and North and South Sinai in which students will train have been improved through the project. Dr. William Oldham, director of USAID's Health Office, believes that the program is one of Egypt's most dynamic and exciting health projects. "Not only is it intellectually exciting from the standpoint of medical education," he explains, "but it is a new concept which is sure to influence other medical schools in Egypt."

Trends

To help ease the shortage of skilled labor in Egypt's construction and industrial areas, a $79.3 million training program has been devised. The World Bank has approved $38 million for a loan to establish vocational training centers and instructors. Egypt has contributed $41.3 million to the program, and the U.S. and several European countries will be invited to provide technical assistance. It is estimated that by 1992, 18,000 Egyptians will have been trained in the planned 22 training centers. (MEED 29 April 83)

Egypt's balance of payments deficit reached L.E. 800 million in fiscal 1982/83 instead of the predicted L.E. 1,500. Minister Mustafa Kamal el Said attributed this to the rationalization of imports and the decrease in international commodity prices.

Egypt's labor force is expected to double during the next 20 years with an estimated eleven million new jobs needed by the year 2000 to fully employ new job market entrants. A profile of this future labor force shows it to be largely urban, to contain more women and to be more highly educated.

Egypt will receive $100 million in financial aid in 1983 from West Germany making it the second-largest recipient of West German aid.

The World Bank has approved a $41.5 million loan to repair pumping stations in Egypt's irrigation and drainage systems. The project will involve approximately 1.2 million feddans and is expected to benefit almost three million people.

According to Japanese officials, Egypt has received $1,040 million in soft loans from Japan since 1975. Egypt has received also $700 million in grants and aid during this period. (MEED 28 Jan 83)

Villagers Turn Resources Into Development

"When will we have our own water tap?"

"These people have had one for nearly one year and everyday I must bring my donkey, two cans and child to fetch water. Sometimes I have to come twice a day. It takes me more than one hour every time. People in this village spend only ten minutes collecting their clean water."

The speaker had come to a water tap which was being shown by local officials to visitors from the United States Congress. The markaz council chairman responded, "Pipes and taps for your village have been included in this year's plans and should be working in nine months." These water taps are being installed by local councils with grants from the USAID-funded Basic Village Services (BVS) program.

Later that same day, the visitors looked at two poultry farms raising chickens for local sale. Both farms were adding a second floor to their broiler houses with profits made from poultry produced on the first floor. The first floor had been financed with a loan from ORDEV's* Local Development Fund (LDF).

BVS and LDF are two of five Egyptian-U.S. activities that comprise USAID's Decentralization Sector Support Program to which USAID has committed $336.2 million to date. The objective of the program is to assist the Government develop and implement a decentralized system of local administration. Almost 2,000 similar rural projects have been started during the past three years. In 1983, the number of activities will increase by over 3,000. Almost all are grants to village councils for better roads, sewers, and drinking water systems, but new loans also are available for profit making village enterprises. Elected village councils organize the enterprises and decide how to reinvest any profits realized.

Between March, 1980 and October, 1982, the LDF made 292 loans totalling L.E. 6.7 million to village councils for projects ranging from poultry and eggs, fish ponds and livestock fattening to tile and brick plants, carpentry shops and village buses. Water and sewerage systems in selected provincial cities are being improved and expanded, and critical equipment, such as trucks, roadgraders, bulldozers, ambulances and fire equipment, is being provided to 24 of Egypt's 26 governorates.

In the BVS program, about L.E. 3.5 million is distributed to each governorate annually after the sub-activities are approved and the governorates have deposited an amount equal to 10% of the grant in a fund to be used for maintaining the projects. The money provided by USAID also pays for several support services including training and technical assistance.

"The most gratifying aspect of the village programs is that villagers have taken the opportunity to use resources to solve their own development problems," says John Roberts, director of USAID's Local Administration and Development Office

* Organization for Reconstruction and Development of the Egyptian Village

which coordinates all decentralization activities, including the BVS and LDF programs. He continues, "Tens of thousands of village councillors have participated in the choice of development projects in their communities. They have shown, time and again, that they can take funds at the beginning of the year and turn them into services for the people within twelve months."

As a Ministry of Planning official notes, "Villagers are developing the skills to use resources to solve their unique and varied problems. The results of the first two years experience are very encouraging."

Saving the Lives of Egypt's Children

Diarrheal disease is a major killer of infants in many countries, and it is responsible for an estimated 100,000 infant and child deaths each year in Egypt. USAID has contributed $26 million for a five-year period to support Egypt's plans to launch a national Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT) campaign to combat the disease. A 25% reduction in child mortality from diarrheal disease is the project goal by the end of this period.

Egypt was one of the first countries to start a major campaign to save its children from this affliction. El Shatby Hospital in Alexandria, where USAID will be financing research, has been designated by the World Health Organization as an international research center for diarrheal disease.

Because two-thirds of the deaths from diarrhea result from severe loss of body fluids, ORT was the cornerstone of the Egyptian program started in 1977. Oral rehydration salts are a mixture of salt, sugar and minerals mixed with water to replace lost body fluids. Packets of oral rehydration salts were initially distributed by Egyptian public health facilities. The new campaign is attempting to make rehydration services and materials more widely available to and used by the public.

ORT is a simple treatment that can be administered inexpensively by the average person in the home, as well as by practitioners in clinics and hospitals. A Diarrheal Disease

The Program

The United States Agency for International Developement is charged with carrying out U.S. economic assistance worldwide. The current program in Egypt is USAID's largest, and since resumption of assistance in 1974, over $7.6 billion has been committed through 1982 to support Egypt's development objectives.

USAID's program in Egypt is benefitting millions who attend schools, visit medical clinics, work in businesses, and use infrastructure built, expanded or refurbished with U.S. assistance. This assistance is three-pronged. It consists of the Commodity Import Program, Public Law 480 Program, and projects. CIP and PL-480 are helping Egypt finance its balance of payments gap and promote sustained production by funding the direct import of commodities, mainly raw materials, capital equipment, and food. Egypt has imported 11.4 million metric tons of agricultural commodities, principally wheat, under PL-480. Project assistance is provided in the areas of industry, infrastructure, agriculture, decentralization, health and population, education, and science and technology.

Infrastructure

USAID has provided $700 million since 1975 to Egypt's electric power network. When completed, USAID-funded power generation will equal or exceed normal output of the Aswan High Dam.

Replacement of the massive spinners in the 12 turbines at the Aswan High Dam is being funded by a $100 million USAID activity. The U.S. and Egypt signed an agreement in April, 1982, obligating $85 million of this amount. The project is estimated to take nine years since ten turbines must remain in operation at all times to meet energy requirements.

The Rod El Farag Water Plant, built in 1903, is the object of a $90.4 million rehabilitation and expansion program by USAID. When the work is finished in 1985, the plant will provide almost one-third of the water, or 650,000 cubic meters a day, for central Cairo.

Work has begun on installation of seven telephone exchanges and related outside plant as part of a major program to expand and modernize Egypt's telecommunications system. USAID is funding this activity which will concentrate on the Cairo and Alexandria areas.

Construction of two 100,000 metric ton grain silos in Cairo and Alexandria is in the final phase. The additional storage capacity will contribute to increased availability of food grains for the Egyptian people.

Steering Committee chaired by Egypt's Minister of Health Muhammad Sabri Zaki coordinates implementation of a national effort to train all practitioners in proper treatment of diarrhea, to improve at-home care of affected children and to assure sufficient quantity and distribution of oral rehydration salts. The scope of the program is ambitious and includes training of 25,000 rural health unit staffs, village leaders and pharmaceutical representatives as well as 26 governorate coordinators and 125 governorate training teams.

The oral rehydration project is an important element of overall USAID support of Egyptian programs to improve the health of the people. Information gathered from this project will help make the future for Egypt's and all the world's children brighter and healthier.

A $100 Million Facelift for Key Port

The Port of Alexandria is handling more ships and cargo today than ever before, thanks to a $100 million expansion program funded by USAID, the Japanese Government and the World Bank.

A large percentage of Egypt's international trade flows through Alexandria, but in 1975, this vital facility was suffering from severe congestion problems due to lack of modern equipment, damaged facilities and increased trade. The improvement program was the result of studies carried out in 1975 by USAID and the World Bank on ways to relieve the congestion and rehabilitate the port.

USAID provided $30.5 million for procuring cargo handling equipment and for support of maintenance facilities and a maintenance management program. Japan provided a $25 million loan for equipment. The balance of the program was funded by the World Bank to support port rehabilitation and a port management study.

The initial objective of the USAID project was to identify the specific equipment required to meet the cargo handling needs. New pieces of equipment were procured to increase cargo

handling capability of the port particularly for moving heavier loads and containerized cargo. Companies providing this equipment were required to implement training programs on operation and maintenance.

The successful results of the overall program have been highly visible in terms of the increased number of ships transiting the port and the greater volume of cargo handled, especially the dramatic rise in the amount of tonnage. Tonnage of non-bulk cargo alone increased 95% between 1976 and 1980. Ship delays also have declined significantly, resulting in a real savings to Egypt in demurrage penalties.

Building Today for Tomorrow's Energy Needs

Egypt's electric power network received a 150 megawatt boost with start-up last month of the first unit of the Abu Sultan electric power station. President Mubarak and U.S. Ambassador Alfred L. Atherton, Jr. were on hand for the dedication of the first unit of the new plant located just south of Ismailia. USAID contributed $141 million for construction of this facility which has a total capacity of 450 megawatts, or one quarter of the output of the Aswan High Dam. The second unit is scheduled to begin operation later this year, and unit three should be completed by July, 1984. The plant will provide more abundant and reliable electricity to the Suez Canal area and supplement reserve capacity for the national power grid.

The opening of the Abu Sultan plant is evidence of the continuing cooperation between the United States and Egypt in the energy sector. The U.S. has contributed over $700 million for four electric power stations, a computerized national energy control center, and rehabilitation of the turbine systems at the Aswan High Dam. The Talkha and Helwan power plants, with a combined capacity of 300 megawatts, are in full operation. The 900-megawatt Shoubra El Kheima thermal power plant is expected to go on line in 1985.

Support for Booming Construction Industry

USAID's significant investment in Egypt's cement production industry is beginning to bear fruit with the official dedication on April 20 by President Mubarak of the Suez Cement Plant. During his visit to the site, located 60 kilometers south of Suez, President Mubarak expressed his appreciation for completion of the fully automated facility which will impact substantially on Egypt's construction industry and contribute to the country's continued economic growth.

Industry

A $145 million USAID Industrial Production Project is assisting Egypt's Ministry of Industry in the planning, design and implementation of various sub-projects aimed at improving and expanding existing public sector industrial companies in Egypt. The project includes training and pollution control measures.

Sub-projects

Modernization and increased production of TRENCO tire company

Purchase of replacement equipment to manufacture El Nasr Steel Pipes

Construction of a caustic soda/chlorine derivatives facility for the Alexandria Oil and Soap Company

Modernization of refractories production at the Egyptian Company for Refractories in Alexandria

Modernization of food processing facilities of the El-Nasr Company for Preserved Foods

Partial modernization of Sornaga's El-Saff and Alexandria plants which produce clay sewer pipes

Funding for a 300,000 metric ton calcined gypsum plant for the Sinai Manganese Company

Renovation of El Mex Salines Plant in Alexandria

Expand plant facility for National Metals

Industrial pollution control in public sector companies

Agriculture

Since 1975, USAID has provided $304.4 million for Egypt's agricultural sector. Current activities are:

Water Use and Management
Improving the social and economic condition of Egypt's small farmers through improved and more efficient irrigation water management

Rice Research and Training
Providing new information and knowledge for production, processing and storing of this important crop

Agricultural Mechanization
Supporting Egyptian efforts to select and implement mechanization activities

Agricultural Development Systems
Strengthening Egypt's institutional capability to plan and conduct activities in agricultural development

Poultry Improvement
Developing programs to increase production of poultry meat and eggs

Aquaculture
Assisting Egypt to establish a fish farming industry

Major Cereals Improvement
Providing new information for increased cereal grain production by improving research and extension capabilities

Small Farmer Production
Assisting the Principal Bank for Development and Agricultural Credit provide more credit to small farmers

Cooperative Marketing
Increasing efficiency of private agricultural marketing cooperatives

Small Scale Agricultural Activities
Providing appropriate or adaptive agricultural technology

Management Training
Establishing training capability for middle level managers working in agriculture

Irrigation and Water Management
Improving the efficiency of Egypt's irrigation system

Data Collection and Analysis
Strengthening Ministry of Agriculture's capability to collect and analyze data and use this data for policy planning

USAID provided a $100 million grant for construction of the plant designed to produce one million tons of cement annually. Egypt currently imports about 50% of the cement it requires. Cement supplied by the Suez operation is targeted for the continuing reconstruction of the Suez Canal area.

Start-up testing is in the final stages, and the plant should be in full operation by summer. The limestone and clay quarries and raw materials blending operations are completed, and cement grinding, storage and packing facilities will be finished this month. USAID also is funding training of 140 people in plant operation and maintenance procedures.

The Suez operation is one of two plants funded by USAID for the Suez Cement Company. The other, the Quattamia Cement Plant, is well underway with $95 million in USAID financing. When completed in the summer of 1984, it will add another 1.4 million tons of cement per year to Egypt's cement production capacity. Together, the two plants will raise national production 60% above current levels.

Closing the Food Security Gap

The current USAID Agricultural Assistance Program in Egypt consists of 13 discrete projects ranging from Rice Research to Data Collection and Analysis. These activities, carried out with the Ministry of Agriculture, are pointed toward increasing agricultural productivity in support of the Government of Egypt's goal of greater food security.

Many of the projects promote research and extension in field and horticultural crops, legumes, forages and poultry. Extension services are deemed essential for improvement of farm production while research is needed to develop new information and expand the supply of available technology. Research and technology packages have been developed, and large scale field trials have demonstrated that substantial increases in yields can be achieved in wheat, maize, sorghum, and rice. As these activities, initiated between 1976 and 1981, begin to mature, USAID is exploring the idea of moving from a focus on individual projects to a broader, sectoral approach that will capitalize on experience gained while strengthening the MOA's capacity to fund and manage an effective research and extension system and expand small farmer production credit programs.

The ABCs of Rural Education

USAID and Egypt's Ministry of Education (MOE) have now entered into the second phase of a Basic Education project designed to increase access of rural children, especially girls, to primary education opportunities. School construction under this program began in March of 1982, and there are now over 300 schools being constructed in El Beheira, Kafr El Sheikh, Sohag, Quena and Assiut governorates. The $39 million contributed by USAID is financing instructional materials, equipment, technical assistance and construction of new schools. The MOE is providing an additional L.E. 25.8 million to fund school construction in the same five governorates.

The location and size of the new schools are based on a school mapping activity carried out since 1981 by MOE personnel. A team from the Ministry works with a local team in each education zone to gather the necessary information for drawing the maps. Location of present primary and secondary schools within each administrative district, population densities and the projected number of school children for 1985 are examples of the types of information being collected.

According to Mr. Hamed Soliman, Director General of the MOE's General Administration for Planning and Follow-up, priority for new schools is given to those areas where there are presently no schools, there is very low enrollment of girls, or existing schools are overcrowded.

The first school completed under this project is the El Bakawat School in Shoubra Kheet markaz, Beheira. The school was opened on December 16, 1982.

Germany Active on the Development Front

The German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) is working with Egypt on various development fronts ranging from vocational training and agricultural engineering to water

Human Resources

Five new governorates are being added to USAID's Basic Education program which is contributing to a higher physical quality of life (PQL) in Egypt through increased primary school enrollments and literacy rates. The new governorates are Minya, Fayum, Giza, Beni Suef and Sharkiya.

The Rural Health Delivery project was initiated in 1976 to expand Egypt's efforts to improve health services in rural areas. To date, dozens of health facilities have been improved and some 1,400 Egyptian doctors, nurses and sanitarians trained. The project scope is being expanded from 10 to 20 districts in 4 governorates.

A $20 million family planning agreement was signed in June to support on-going Egyptian programs. There have been 385 health units renovated under USAID's population development activities.

Over 2500 Egyptians have completed technical and professional skills training in the United States. In addition, the $54 million Peace Fellowships program has permitted 800 Egyptian Peace Fellows to study in the U.S. as a means of strengthening Egypt's pool of trained professionals to assist in the development effort.

For Your Information

The Development Information Center (DIC) is the technical reference center for the USAID mission in Cairo, and its resources are available to anyone interested in development. The Center provides ready access to reports on Egypt financed by USAID and others, as well as to books, studies and journals in the development field. The Center has documents in the following categories: agriculture, irrigation, economics, labor migration, industry, education, urban development, health, family planning, appropriate technology, and energy.

The collection is growing and currently numbers approximately 3,500 documents in hard copy or paper form and 10,000 in microfiche which can be viewed on the microfiche reader in the center. The entire collection is catalogued on a computer data base that also incorporates the AID/Washington Research and Development Data Base.

The Center sponsors a monthly discussion series highlighting either aspects of the USAID program in Egypt or broader development issues. Sessions recently were held on; incorporating assistance specifically to women in the project mode; a presentation of the status of the Neighborhood Urban Services project; and a seminar on the relationship between agricultural policy and population growth.

The Development Digest is published quarterly by the United States Agency for International Development in the Arab Republic of Egypt. USAID's offices are in the Cairo Center, Kasr El Aini, Cairo. The Digest seeks to inform the international and Egyptian development communities about national development activities funded by USAID. Programs being carried out by other groups and international organizations are highlighted from time to time, and these parties are invited to submit material to the Digest. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

resources and urbanization. The GTZ is commissioned by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany to implement technical cooperation with developing countries. Mr. Reinhard von Brunn, former head of the Cairo GTZ, explains that the agency provides technical expertise and field experience relevant to carrying out many types of development programs and institutional projects. He emphasizes that GTZ's activities have a pilot function and are designed to be turned over to Egypt as soon as possible. To accomplish this turnover, training, education and technical transfer are key elements in all GTZ activities.

With an annual budget of approximately 15 to 20 million Deutsche marks, GTZ in Egypt has launched numerous projects. A regional agricultural development program in El-Nahda is involved in cattle breeding, horticulture and improved productivity and income for small farmers in newly reclaimed desert areas. A mechanization training center in Maamoura is teaching farm workers to operate agricultural machinery such as tractors and irrigation pumps, while another program has rehabilitated many of the wells and water pumps in the Western Desert and trained local residents to continue the proper maintenance of these critical water systems. In an effort to support agricultural extension services in Egypt, GTZ is working with the Government to produce radio, video and other media presentations to take out in the field.

Because training and education are fundamental parts of the GTZ development plan, many activities involve vocational training in different occupational areas. One such program coordinates with the Ministry of Industry to upgrade the skills of industrial workers and to transfer new technologies. A short-term training center for construction workers in Belbes has been so successful that GTZ now is training instructors to carry on the project.

Family planning, improving rural health facilities, repair of the rail system, upgrading of laboratory equipment, introduction of advanced technology to Egypt's research centers, and linking small communities in the El-Obour district to form a larger urban area are other activities currently being implemented between GTZ and Egypt.